

And I try always to think about how I can be a leader with a voice for all the people and still be very up front with the American people about what I have to do and what you all have to do. Because these are things we have to do together. The Government cannot solve all the problems of the country. But together we can solve the problems of the country, and together we can move ahead.

I always come away with this—I come away here so much more energized and optimistic because I think people are real realistic and yet hopeful out here. I don't think the American people are as cynical as sometimes people in public life think they are. I think you all still

believe in yourselves and your potential and your country.

Mr. Donovan. Congress is coming back from its break. And I'll just ask you just in a few seconds, have you heard anything here tonight that will change your agenda when you go back to Washington?

The President. No, but I'm going to tell them that near as I can tell, people sure want them to pass that crime bill and not fool around with it, do it right away. That's where we're going to start.

NOTE: The town meeting began at 7:35 p.m. at the WCNC-TV studios.

Exchange With Reporters in Charlotte April 5, 1994

Supreme Court Justice Resignation

Q. Mr. President, have you heard about Justice Blackmun's resignation tomorrow?

The President. I can't comment on it. Let's let him speak for himself.

Q. Have you spoken to him in the last two days?

The President. I have not.

Q. Have you got a short list, Mr. President?

The President. Let Justice Blackmun speak for himself. I have not spoken to him. We have to let him speak for himself.

Q. Has he written to you? Has he notified you?

The President. No. I have not talked to him. I have not talked to him or, to the best of my knowledge, we have received no letter from him. Let's let him speak for himself—some communication with him tomorrow.

NOTE: The exchange began at 9:45 p.m. outside the WCNC-TV studios. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on the Resignation of Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun and an Exchange With Reporters April 6, 1994

The President. Good morning. It is my duty and my honor on behalf of the people of the United States of America to thank Justice Blackmun for his lifetime of service to our Nation.

I have received his letter announcing his intention to step down from the Supreme Court. In so doing, he will step up into our history. During his 24 years on our highest court, Justice Blackmun has become part of the rich and evolving story of American justice and constitutional law with majesty and reason, with scholar-

ship and grace. He is a good man who has earned the respect and the gratitude of every one of his fellow countrymen and women.

When President Nixon nominated Harry Blackmun for service on the Court, his candidacy naturally occasioned a great deal of speculation about what kind of Justice he would be. Some labeled him a strict constructionist. But he rejected any attempt to tag him with a label, saying, and I quote, "I've been called